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# The Moral Response Of Christians Towards Same Sex Marriage

## Introduction

This essay is about the moral response of Christians toward people who identify as a sexual minority. Like the lesbian woman in the opening quote, many sexual minorities experience rejection from their churches. Why do some Christians support same-sex marriage when others do not? For the first time in recorded history, several nations have officially recognized that a significant minority of men and women have different sexual identities and romantic interests than do the majority. As a part of that official recognition, several nations have legalized same sex marriages. These changes have come about in the past few decades and represent a fast pace of social change compared to other social changes in human history. For example, for most of human history, people have been legally held as slaves, and most nations severely restricted the rights of women. Social activists worked for more than a century to end slavery, the unequal treatment of racial and ethnic minorities, and the minimal role of women. But changes to accord rights to approve same-sex marriage have occurred within the past two decades. Christians have different views on the role of men and women in society and in the church. Most Christian traditions restrict the role of women in ministry, but this has changed in recent decades. When it comes to marriage, only a few Christian groups have changed their stance to marry same-sex couples. Christian leaders have explained why some forms of sexual activity are immoral and why a Christian marriage should only be between one man and one woman.

In this essay, I will attempt to clarify key moral issues related to sexual identity and same-sex marriage. To accomplish this goal, I will first explain some of the ways people talk about sexual identity and relationships that are not heterosexual. Second, I will refer to the SCOPES model outlined to illustrate how key aspects of personal functioning can be different for sexual minorities. Third, I will show how Christians can use the six dimensions of moral psychology to appraise the way different Christians view the moral issues involved in sexual identity and same-sex marriage. In concluding this overview, I will refer to the biblical texts that most people cite when discussing the morality of sexual activity other than sex within a marriage between one man and one woman.

## The Reason for Choosing To Write On This Subject

I believe same-sex marriage is one of the most controversial topic or subject facing not only the moral standard in the Christendom, but also the social life and the human right of an individual today in our society or generation today. Have seen and heard many fruitless effort being made to see how best to eradicate this issue, and being able to write and research on this very subject will help give me a clary picture of the course of it, the gravity and if possible know the lead down plans in which institution, the government, and the Christian body have put in place to help solve this issue. Also as an up and coming servant minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ , its will help me get ideas of how best to handle cases such as this practically , should I encounter one in the ministry.

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My method of Research is on past articles, court journals, Christian's articles and the theological view that leads to me using the Bible, newspapers and website. I choose to use this methods especially the past articles and journals and the Bible because I believe this issue started way back in the old testament in the bible in the city of Sodom and Gomorrah, where the sin of man was very grievous in God' so sight and due to that He destroyed a whole city because of this same issues which was very rampant in those days. Moreover, it has carried it on from our past till now. Therefore going back to the root course of this file or methods will give me vivid picture on how to best present this issue or subject.

Courts journals and past newspapers are the number one source I believe one can use because of its practicality and the reality of the social view on a said matters when it's got to do with the right of humans.

## **The Analysis of The Problem (The Creation Account In Genesis)**

The first point most make comes from the creation account in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. God created two sexes, male and female and joined them together in a blessed union. Jesus referred to these Genesis verses when he explained that God designed marriage as a permanent relationship.

A second point refers to the sins of the people at Sodom and Gomorrah, Both stories refer to sexual assault and include references to desire for same-sex activity. Third, a law in Leviticus banned male with male sex Finally, the apostle Paul addressed the matter of sexual conduct and marriage in a few places, but a passage from Romans chapter 1: 24– 31 specifically mentions same-sex activity as wrong for both men and women. Jewish and Christian scholars have offered different opinions about the correct translation of the words and phrases as well as the interpretation of these verses. Christian leaders also argue about how Hebrew laws and the teachings of Paul should guide contemporary Christians in how to live a moral life. Finally, I will modify a phrase from my presentation on psychology and morality to address the current issue. Christian moral judgments about sex-related issues are based on four factors: An interpretation of the biblical texts, the influence of one or more aspects of human nature (e.g., SCOPES model) informed by life experiences, a specific understanding of relevant sexuality, and one or more moral reasons common in their culture. Talking about Sexual Identity and Same-Sex Relationships Before discussing the moral issues, it is important to be as clear as possible about what people mean by commonly used terms. On a simple level, children are identified as girls or boys based on their natal sex.

Natal sex refers to sexual identity based on visible sex organs present at birth. As children grow, they are treated differently by peers and adults based on their appearance as boys or girls. Most societies have different clothes and activities considered right, or at least normal, for girls and boys, women and men. The terms boys, girls, men, and women are gender terms and not sex terms. Gender refers to the cultural aspect of sexuality that is only remotely linked to biological sex characteristics such as genitals and hormones. The permissible similarities in clothing and activities between the genders vary from culture to culture and from historical era to era. The prohibitions on what women and men can wear come from many sources, such as law, religion, tradition, and families. Sexuality is commonly thought of in terms of distinct categories, which works for communication purposes but does not describe the experiences of some persons. A common category is heterosexual vs. homosexual referring to a person's emotional,

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romantic, and sexual attraction. Homosexual men are identified as gay, but homosexual women sometimes identify as gay and sometimes as lesbian. Bisexuals experience sexual attraction to both men and women but may emphasize one preference more than another. Bisexuals may identify primarily as a heterosexual man or woman or as a gay man or lesbian woman.

## **The Nature Of The Problem**

I will use those four dimensions to discuss aspects of sexual identity important to understanding the complexity of the sexual issues Christians judge as morally right or wrong. First, a review of the six dimensions. People have a Spiritual (S) core, which is heavily influenced by the religious beliefs of family and friends as well as personal experience. Cognition (C) involves thoughts, memories, and images. Observable (O) behavior refers to those durable patterns of behavior that form unique personalities. Psychologists commonly recognize five personality traits or behavior patterns of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism in addition to other traits. Physiology (P) is the dimension that encompasses our biological state, which includes our general health, hormones, and anything we take to alter our biological functioning such as medicine, food, and drink. Emotions (E) are sometimes difficult to describe, but many recognize feelings as positive and negative. Emotions are part of what it takes to motivate people to act. Social (S) functioning refers to influence due to social context. Any given human action can be influenced by several factors including our spirituality (S), thoughts (C), personality traits (O), general health and biological functioning (P), feelings (E), and our social context (S), which involves our location, the people present, and the time of day or year.

## **The Spiritual Effects**

Now let us see how the model provides a framework for understanding different aspects of sexual identity. Christians who become aware that they are different from other men and women have a challenging Spiritual experience. Desires for emotional, romantic, or sexual relationships with Same-Sex Marriage. One's own sex or discomfort with one's sexuality can be disturbing when differences are summarily dismissed as sin. Spiritual well-being is vitally important to committed Christians. And commitment involves living life according to biblical principles.

Sexuality is also a major part of what it means to be a person. A great deal of life for most persons is bound up in life-long loving relationships. The Christian ideal for relationships is typically portrayed as marriage, and a common desire for couples is to have children. People who are uninterested in heterosexual relationships can feel a great deal of inner distress and tension when their sexuality seems at odds with the teaching of their faith. And many Christians increase this distress by removing LGBTQ persons from church ministry or asking them to leave a church. Some Christian parents have told LGBTQ persons they don't want them around their children. For many LGBTQ persons, openness about their gender identity and sexuality means leaving their spiritual home.

Thoughts (Cognition) can be preoccupied by a search for identity. Even when a person reaches a point of clarity that he or she is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, there are still thoughts about who to tell, how to live, and how to deal with rejection. For many Christians who are sexual minorities, the Emotions linked to the troubling thoughts will be decidedly negative. Anger can be felt toward God and all those who offer only condemnation and insults. The whole

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experience can obviously be depressing when people lose friends and family members or their worth as a human being is continually challenged. And anxiety can be expected when threats of violence and damnation in the afterlife occur.

Another important emotion linked to some forms of sexuality is disgust. Many people experience a strong aversion to certain types of sexual expression. Observable behavior can be a challenge. In a non-supportive setting, any behavioral expression of romantic interest in a person of the same sex will be condemned. Some try to fake being straight, and some have even married people of the opposite sex and had children despite their inner sense that these actions feel unnatural.

Physiological differences may not be obvious for many who identify as gay or lesbian, but some researchers have identified differences for some sexual minorities. Scientists have found evidence for chromosomal differences, but these findings are not definitive. Others find that testosterone levels are higher in heterosexual men and lesbian women. Some researchers found that a same-sex orientation occurs more frequently among twins and siblings and is more common among family members than in the general population. Studies of sexual responding reveal clear and quick biological responding to sexual stimuli that is different between straight and gay men as well as between straight and lesbian women. Because of the role of culture, sexuality cannot be fully accounted for by physiological factors alone. A person's social context makes a difference in dealing with sexual maturity regardless of orientation.

## **The Magnitude Of The Issues And Its Relevance To Urban Living**

An average-looking boy is raised in the home of a fundamentalist pastor who has remarried after the death of his first wife, the boy's mother. His step-mother has two boys who are older and feel called to be missionaries. As he enters the teen years, he finds that he is sexually attracted to other boys. Although friendly with girls in the church, he has no romantic interest in them. Not wanting to appear different, he goes on group dates with the youth group. He wonders how he will ever be able to talk with someone about his feelings. He prays that God will change him.

A girl is raised by a loving single mother who is quite busy with work, two younger children, and attempts at having a personal life. The girl has a pleasant disposition and enjoys times to visit her friends but she's known as a tomboy. One day things go horribly wrong as an older brother of a neighbor seduces her and threatens to harm her and her siblings if she says anything. She keeps her sexual abuse a secret. As she matures she finds men repulsive and enjoys the comfort of other girls. Eventually, she connects with another young woman with whom she shares common interests. In each social setting there are parents, peers, siblings, pastors, and others who can make a difference in a young person's life. The words they use and the way they demonstrate love and respect can have a profound influence on the way people think about, feel toward, and act upon their romantic and sexual desires. The social setting (e.g., home, college, work) will also be a factor in how comfortable the person feels in seeking spiritual guidance or consulting a psychotherapist.

## **Addressing The Issue (Care vs. Harm)**

Care vs. Harm Conservatives and progressives often refer to harm when judging an act as

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immoral. In many contexts, the opposite of harming someone is caring for someone. Christians can point to Jesus' formulation of the second greatest commandment, which tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves.<sup>15</sup> Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates caring for a beaten man in contrast to allowing him to be stranded by a roadside without treatment.<sup>16</sup> Conservatives view same-sex marriage as harming the individuals and the church. Based on the verses mentioned earlier, people who engage in same-sex relations commit acts of immorality and can expect to be harmed as a result. It was this kind of thinking that led some Christians to view the AIDs epidemic as God's punishment because at first, AIDs was commonly found among gay men. This judgment is less common since AIDs spread to heterosexual adults and children. A less literal conservative view refers to harm in a spiritual sense. This perspective leaves the specific judgment about what happens to those who violate biblical teaching up to God.

## **In The Institution of Marriage**

Same-Sex Marriage - Another conservative perspective focuses on the harm done to the institution of marriage. As noted above, conservatives cite biblical texts to show that a Christian view of marriage includes one man and one woman. Any other relationship harms the Christian community and society at large because it violates God's view of an orderly society.

Progressive Christians focus on the harm done to individuals who find themselves attracted to people of their own sex. To deny LGBT persons the right to marry someone they love and to enjoy intimacy is to subject them to emotional pain for their entire life. Conservative Christians cause additional harm to LGBT persons when they refuse admission to schools (e.g., Christian colleges), restrict employment opportunities, or participation in church activities.<sup>17</sup> The limitations on education, employment, housing, and worship result in economic hardship, social isolation, and feeling disconnected from God. Some progressive Christians point to examples of the sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults as the reason Paul condemned same-sex relationships in his era. These harmful activities are of concern, not the loving relationships of LGBT persons who desire to marry.

## **Liberty vs. Oppression**

The Exodus story is the quintessential example of liberation from oppression. Although Christians do not celebrate the Passover as Jews do, they do recognize God's liberating power. Same-Sex Marriage and the importance of resisting oppression. Conservative Christians encourage people to be free from the burden of sin, which includes forbidden sexual activity and relationships that are different from God's original plan. To live a life that is contrary to God's rules is to live a life in bondage, which will ultimately lead to eternal punishment. Progressive Christians focus on liberating LGBT persons from the oppression of religious and social rules that keep them from enjoying a fulfilled life in a loving relationship with another person. They not only point to Jesus' teaching about loving others, but they also point to Jesus' teaching about a new way of living that is free from the old laws. For example, Jesus taught that people could not put new wine in old wine bottles, suggesting that he was offering a new way of life. Also, as noted above, progressives point to the attempt of the early church leaders to reduce the unnecessary burden of old rules, which new Christians were required to keep.<sup>25</sup> Today, Christian leaders are advised to consider which old rules should be kept and which ones should be let go in order to promote freedom in Christ rather than keep people chained to old ways of thinking.

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## **Biblical and social Ways in Addressing the Issue**

The church ought to be supportive of people attempting to understand their sexuality to treat people with love and respect. They should observe that all people are sinners and in need of redemption. Also Considering these perspectives, the church ought to be supportive of people attempting to understand their sexuality they have to understand that one sin is not worse than another is. A loving and caring attitude offers lifelong support through fellowship and encouragement.

Finally, the governmental agency must if possible pass out a roleing in the favor of the LGBT concerning discrimination against the LGBT in order to offer them safety and security and also acceptance in the society, whereby they can have equal right as any normal individuals and be able to work and have a life for themselves. Some advocate maintaining relationships with LGBT persons and trusting that God's spirit will do the work of convicting people of any sin in their lives when people seek to live in a right relationship with God.

## **Conclusion**

To Conclude I leave you with a final statement as a guide in thinking about Christian morality and same-sex marriage: Christian moral judgment about same-sex marriage is based on an interpretation of biblical texts, the influence of human nature modified by life experiences, an understanding of human sexuality, and one or more moral reasons influenced by culture. Actions taken on the basis of moral judgments about same-sex marriage can have a life-long impact on the lives of individuals as well as their relationships, families, churches, and people in their social network.